

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 032737
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:TJCAROLAN:OSG/LL
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S/ SGOLDSMITH

-----130233Z 025694 /62
P 130227Z FEB 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 032737

STADIS////////////////////////////////////
EXDIS - FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ATERTON

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SY, US

SUBJECT: SYRIAN JEWS

REF: DAMASCUS 306, 939

1. FYI. WE WILL WANT TO DISCUSS WITH YOU DURING IN-FLIGHT BRIEFING RIYADH TO DAMASCUS HOW TO HANDLE QUESTION OF SYRIAN JEWS DURING SECRETARY'S VISIT. ONE POSSIBILITY WOULD BE FOR SECRETARY TO MENTION TO ASAD, PREFERABLY WITH ISA SABBAGH THE ONLY OTHER PERSON PRESENT, THAT WE HAVE APPRECIATED THE RECENT STEPS TAKEN TO EASE THE PLIGHT OF SYRIAN JEWS.

2. ALSO, WE WILL BE BRINGING WITH US A SHORT LETTER TO ASAD SIGNED BY SENATOR JAVITS, REPRESENTATIVES SOLARZ AND
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WAXMAN, AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN SYRIAN JEWRY. THE SIGNERS STATE THAT THEY HAVE BEEN HEARTENED AND ENCOURAGED OVER THE ELIMINATION AND RELAXATION OF SOME OF THE PRACTICES AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING THE POSITION OF SYRIAN JEWS. LETTER DOES CONCLUDE, HOWEVER, WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WHICH WE HOPE WILL CAUSE NO PROBLEMS FOR ASAD: "AT THE SAME TIME, WE REMAIN HOPEFUL THAT THE REMAINING PRACTICES APPLIED

SOLELY TO JEWS WILL BE ENDED SOON AND THAT THE JEWS OF SYRIA WILL ENJOY IN ALL RESPECTS THE SAME STATUS AS OTHER CITIZENS OF SYRIA." END FYI.

3. YOU WILL HAVE TO BE THE JUDGE OF WHETHER TO SAY ANYTHING TO KHADDAM IN ADVANCE OF THE SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL. IF YOU BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL -- PARTICULARLY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE VISIT -- YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO INFORM KHADDAM THAT WE WELCOME SARG'S JAN. 10 DECREE LIFTING RESTRICTIONS PARTICULAR TO SYRIAN JEWS AND THAT WE GREATLY APPRECIATE THE PRIVATE BRIEFING ACCORDED TO YOU IN CONNECTION WITH IT. THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS IN THIS SITUATION CAN ONLY BE VIEWED AS FARSIGHTED AND POSITIVE. THEY WILL CERTAINLY HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON SYRIA'S INTERNATIONAL IMAGE. YOU MAY ALSO STATE THAT WE HAVE QUIETLY INFORMED KEY SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN HERE OF THE SUBSTANCE AND IMPORT OF THIS STEP, THAT THEY QUICKLY RECOGNIZED ITS SIGNIFICANCE, AND THAT THEY HAVE KEPT THE MATTER CONFIDENTIAL.

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 13-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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